

The Baptist Record

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Churches can bring about change in environmental crisis

NASHVILLE (BP) — Churches are going to have to do more than just observe "Earth Day" this week if they truly want to make a difference in the environmental crisis, according to a Southern Baptist ethicist.

They must be willing to embrace a new "environmental" ethic. "Too many Christians have studied the Bible for too many years without ever learning about the message of earth-keeping," said Robert Parham, director of the Baptist Center for Ethics. "We have simply missed it. Or perhaps we have heard it but chosen to ignore it. Our failure mandates a return to the Bible with open eyes for the ancient word about a modern-day problem."

Parham describes today's environmental crisis in detail in his recently released book, *Loving Neighbors Across Time: A Christian Guide to Protecting the Earth*, published by New Hope Press.

The issue of earth-keeping,

Parham said, is evident in Scripture. "The Bible speaks about guarding the garden, letting the land rest, preserving fruit trees, protecting hens, knowing that the creation belongs to the Creator, celebrating the beauty of God's created order, and recognizing that human sinfulness causes the earth's suffering," he said. "These and other broad themes flow through the Scriptures."

The church's task, he said, is to not only identify these themes and teach them but to lead the Chris-

By Susan Todd Doyle

tian community to apply them. All too often, churches are not willing to recognize problems caused by social issues, much less

August Aviary

By Michael Carey

It's not a windbreak anymore, really. It's a green chorus of wood. It's not a forest, either, too small and we're in it, under it, at the center of the singing, layer upon layer, line after line, generation upon generation, every kind of tree imaginable, us and them and God, as always, planting where He pleases.

We can see out, but you can't see in, until you enter.

It's what holds the earth together. It's what keeps it spinning. It's the miracle that fills us when we breathe, this music, that keeps on playing, no matter who passes below it, no matter how dirty the breeze, or if you stop and listen to the song.

to act on them, he said.

"Unfortunately, the discipline of Christian ethics frequently ends

where concrete action ought to begin," Parham said.

The environmental issue is one issue in which the "Christian community has been largely silent," he said. But it is one issue in which the Christian community should be involved, he asserts.

Examples of the environmental crisis reviewed in Parham's book include:

— The nation's garbage glut has filled the nation's landfills. More than 66% of landfills have been closed since 1970. A significant portion of those remaining will be closed in the next several years.

— The average American family of three tosses away 87.5 pounds of trash every week.

— Compared to other nations, the United States stands as "king" of the garbage mountain. Individually, Americans generate more garbage than citizens of every other nation.

— Earth's food supply is placed at risk by herbicides, antibiotics, and growth hormones. Other animal drugs compound the problem. Many of these animal drugs — some say as many as 90% — have not been approved as safe. The real effect of long-term exposure to chemicals in the food chain remains unknown.

Parham suggested three things which churches can do to make a difference in the environment: Rethink the issue, reform community life using its purchasing power and influence in the marketplace, and tackle public policy regarding the environment.

"Reformed congregations act as yeast in dough," he said. "Their influence spreads slowly, changing society as it moves."

Doyle writes for WMU.

Several avenues exist for Christian involvement in environment care

By Chip Alford

NASHVILLE (BP)—Christians interested in becoming involved in pro-environment activities have several avenues of participation available.

"Christian participation in pro-environment activities involves a two-step process," said Ray Higgins, assistant professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "The first step is to help Christians realize pro-environment attitudes and actions are both a divine expectation and a biblical mandate. The second step is to point Christians toward pro-environment organizations which educate and involve their members in activities that enhance our earthly home's life-support system."

Baptist state convention ethics agencies, such as the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, the Council on Christian Life and Public Affairs of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, also address environmental issues, Higgins said.

Many environmental organizations have a non-religious philosophy and a broad-based membership, Higgins recounted. Some of these groups are well known, such

as the Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation, the Audubon Society, Greenpeace, and Friends of the Earth (FOE). Governmental agencies also address environmental concerns, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, with headquarters in Washington, D.C.

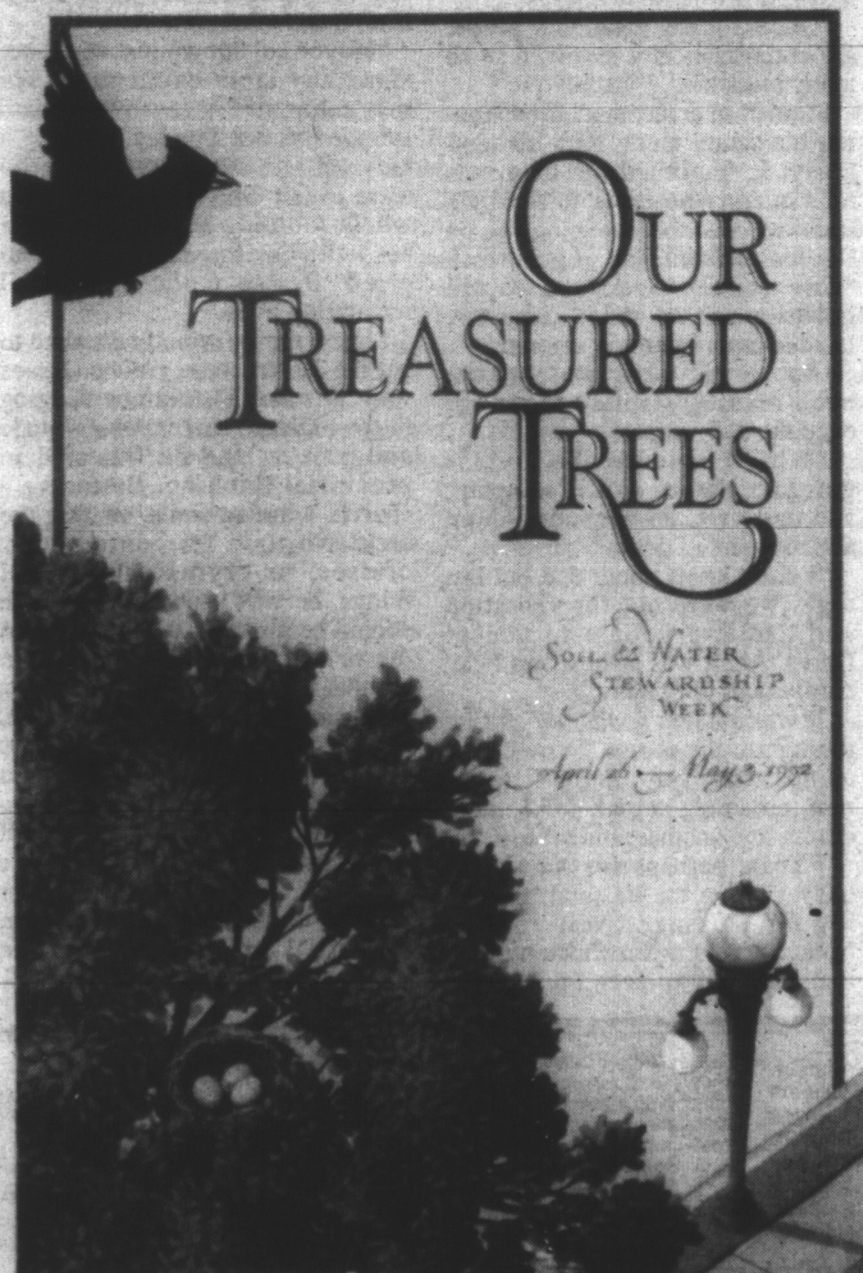
and regional offices across the United States. Each state also has an agency concerned with various conservation issues including fish and wildlife, environmental protection, parks and recreation, forests, and water resources.

Alford writes for BSSB.



MC wins conservation award

Ted Snazelle, right, of First Church, Clinton, and professor of biology at Mississippi College, received the 1992 Conservation Developer Award on behalf of the college from the Hinds County Soil and Water Conservation District during its recent annual banquet at Hinds Community College. Making the presentation is Jack Winstead, representing HCSWCD. MC received the award for its beautification program, supervised by Snazelle. (MC photo)



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The rain in Spain

The English Bible is the supreme heritage of the English-speaking world. It has played a part in making English the most sought-after language of our day. One's language, the ability to verbally communicate, is a precious instrument. This, in spite of Shakespeare's having said, "We have been at a great feast of languages and stolen some of the scraps."

Presently there are between 3,000 and 6,000 languages in the world. The Bible, or least part of it, has been translated into over 2,000. However, many languages, tribes, and dialects are dying out and linguists say we may have only 300 languages in generations to come. About 350 million people use English as their primary language, but this could well be just the tip of the iceberg. English constitutes 80% of information stored in computers. It is the language of technology and science, sports, the Olympic games, and the majority of business deals. It is also the language of Christianity.

English is the second language in India, Nigeria, and a dozen

other nations. Even in the back areas of Russia, not on the news, someone can speak English. As a grammarian said, "English is where it's at." It is Britain's most reliable export and the editor of a famous English dictionary pronounced a man deprived if he does not know English. Japanese are said to be worried by the invasion of 20,000 English words into their vocabulary since 1945, and "we now speak Japlish," according to one Tokyo wit.

English now travels with the speed of sound to most every hamlet in the world. Can you believe the Tuareg tribe in Africa delayed its annual migratory expedition a week in order to catch the last episode of "Dallas?"

Is there a connection between the global conquering rapidity of the English language and the resources of western Christianity? The doors are open for video and audio English to reach the palace and the nipa huts. The hunger for English could be the vehicle to reach millions with the message of the gospel. I'm grateful to see the Foreign Mission Board using this avenue into China, Mon-

golia, Russia, and other nations. Also, to teachers who set forth, learning a new culture and speaking the same tongue, have a great ministry awaiting.

Would we be amiss to proclaim a "green alert" and get video teams into far away places. I've witnessed entire villages turn out to see a scratchy "Baptist Hour" film. The Voice of America is taking our culture (much of it hardly worth the export effort) all over the globe. Here and there Christianity has the voice of the Andes, the voice of Asia, of Africa, but the need is to proclaim glad tidings in every home. Bible societies have made the Bible available in English or the mother tongue. The media should provide the quickest way to make known the Word.

The tower of Babel is not being rebuilt; however, English is still the most sought-after language of this era. The power of the printed page, the radio-TV message, the unsuspecting audio tape, and satellite communication cannot be ignored. To whom much is given, much will be required.

B. STILL AND KNOW...



Quo vadis?

Maybe it was a young man dreaming dreams or an old man having a vision. Either way, I propped my foot on the back bumper of a Chevette and asked the pastor how things were going. I could tell he was excited by the way he missed the bumper while attempting to imitate my feat.

"Oh, it's going great. Our people are enthusiastically involved in so many ministries. I just love it."

I turned in amazement, questioning his sanity along with his dexterity. It reminded me of a new missionary who came to the field and was described as gung-ho, on fire for the Lord, and of great zeal. "Give us a few weeks and we will get him out of that," was the laconic reply of an old veteran.

Apparently this pastor had not been reading Baptist papers or even the daily papers.

"Why, it looks like the world is going to pieces, evil is rampant, and daily we are becoming more and more like Sodom."

"I don't know about that but last night we were out for visitation and had two people to accept Christ. Ah, it was so neat and I can hardly wait til Sunday."

It was evident I was not getting through to the pastor. "You know, all this controversy in the Convention, ordaining certain folks, slandering one another, and all that."

"Yeah, perhaps so, but I'm so busy visiting the hospital, preparing my messages; tell you the truth, I don't pay much attention to that. I just try to keep up with my

work."

The Chevette sagged a little more as I pressed down.

"Man, that's where the action is." Facetiously I plunged deeper. "Firing, hiring, blasting, ripping down, tearing up — why that's what it's all about. You had best pay attention to this or it could even touch your church."

"Maybe so, but we just could not stand any more excitement. We just completed a lay evangelism school and last Sunday morning a lady led two ladies to Christ who were in jail. She cried through the whole morning service and gave her testimony that night and we all cried. Praise God, He is still reclaiming lives."

I knew then it would take time to get the lad to come around. Issues were at stake, institutions hanging in the balance, careers being made and broken, and he was still in provincial thinking. Pastoring a church, winning souls, visiting the sick! No time for conferences, cruises, or crying, and of all things, he was happy doing it. He should be moaning as the weekend draws near, not looking forward to another "great time in the Lord."

Obviously the lad has no vision, like he is not running for some office, seeking appointment on some board, or even following some semipolitical group. He will never amount to anything except a good and faithful servant. Wonder what he thinks the Lord called him to do? I kicked the tire on the Chevette as I walked away. — GH

"To him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28) ...

We can minister to the unemployed

The economic picture in America is said to be improving, but still many people seek employment. Thousands have been laid off and wonder if there is "life after lay-off." It plays a major role in the race for the White House and in the house down the street.

In Mississippi we may have weathered the recession a little better than many states. Still, churches see the havoc wrought by job termination and seek new ways to minister to the challenge.

Dozens of Mississippi churches participate in fund raising for expensive medical treatment while members are without insurance benefits. Some will pay a month's rent for an unemployed member; others operate a semi-employment office, matching jobs with people. One church on the Gulf Coast provides work for a limited time in various ministries.

There are many scriptures admonishing man to work (2 Thes. 3:10). But when work is not available, and the unemployment rate skyrockets, should the church seek to have a ministry in helping people find work, or give assistance as the church is able?

Pray only, or pray and pay? While it was not the major part of its ministry, apparently the early church did try to care for its mem-

bers. Today, this creates a "church family," builds loyalty, and makes all the church more caring.

A member of one of our churches shares his testimony:

"My name is David and I have been laid off from the offshore oil industry since September 1991. I did apply for unemployment compensation, but that took nearly a month to start coming. Though it helped some, it did not begin to replace what was already lost. The bills continued to come in, our health insurance had to be paid, and there were just everyday expenses to be met.

"My wife works also, but going from two incomes to just one is very stressful. It changed our priorities and caused us to make adjustments as a family. My wife has had more difficulty dealing with it mainly because she looks to me for her security. Our oldest daughter may have developed a nervous condition from the stress of my job loss.

"I tried finding other work. It's not always easy. The state of our economy and my being over 40 adds to the difficulty. I looked into several good job possibilities and they fell through. This left me quite discouraged for some time.

"I thank the good Lord for providing for us. Even when things

don't look that encouraging, he is always there. How thankful I am that I can claim his promises, like Hebrews 4:16. I can call upon my Lord every day and he hears my pleas; even in times when I cannot bring myself to pray, it is reassuring to know there are other Christians praying for us. Our Lord is good and our needs have always been met.

"Our church family has helped us considerably with monetary assistance, with their prayers, and just being there. There are not words to express what it's been like to have Christian friends.

"My wife's family lives near us and they have been a help. I thank them for their help, their prayers, and encouraging words. There were several organizations which gave us some assistance. There is some funding for situations like ours, that others may not know is available.

"I would like to add a word of encouragement to those who may be experiencing a similar situation: It is not always easy to cope with difficult problems, but our God is faithful and we can trust him, like Psalm 20:7 and Philippians 4:19 say. While I am still out of work and have my days, the Lord is still there providing. Let our prayers and his leading be our source of strength." — GH

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Mississippi earns two ACTS nominations

FORT WORTH, Texas — The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board has been nominated for a 1992 ACTS Award its program entitled, "If You Love Me..." according to Deborah Little, national marketing director for ACTS (the American Christian Television System).

"If You Love Me..." is a 58-minute program featuring highlights of the 156th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention held Nov. 12-13, 1991. It is one of only three programs nominated for an ACTS Award in the category of "Religious Special."

"If You Love Me..." was produced using the facilities of First

Church, Jackson, Miss. State ACTS director, Farrell Blankenship, produced the program with technical direction and editing assistance from Ken Anderson of Anderson Productions, also of Jackson. The program was aired on a number of local ACTS boards around the state.

ACTS of Laurel, Miss., has been nominated for a 1992 ACTS Award for its program entitled, "PowerTracts," according to Little.

"PowerTracts" is a weekly one-hour music video program featuring Christian artists and music. The program's segments include interviews with Christian recording artists, local guests, and "Teens on

Track," a look at local teens in the walks with the Lord. It is one of only three programs nominated for an ACTS Award in the category of "Musical or Dramatic Series."

The ACTS Awards will be presented during an awards ceremony called "Night of Honors," to be held April 23 at Travis Avenue Church, in Fort Worth, Tex. Popular singer, songwriter, and television host Gary McSpadden will host the gala event.

Christian recording artists Steve and Annie Chapman will present musical entertainment for the two-hour special, which will be telecast live on ACTS beginning at 8 p.m., Central Daylight Time.

SEBTS trustees will vote on nominee Paige Patterson

By Herb Hollinger

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Paige Patterson, an architect of the "conservative resurgence" in the Southern Baptist Convention, is the nominee for the next president of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Roger Ellsworth, Benton, Ill., pastor and chairman of the seminary's trustees, told Baptist Press April 20 Patterson, 49, was the choice of the search committee and had accepted the committee's invitation.

Patterson told Baptist Press he would make a statement at Criswell

College's morning chapel April 21 and would prefer not to make any comments until that time.

A special meeting of SEBTS board of trustees has been called May 14 at the Wake Forest campus at 2 p.m., Ellsworth said. Patterson will meet with faculty and students of Southeastern before the trustee meeting and possibly as early as next week in keeping with trustee policy.

The announcement confirmed speculation going back before President Lewis Drummond's official retirement notice earlier this

year. He will retire June 30 after four years as president. Many trustees, students, and alumni had urged Patterson's election as the fifth president to help the struggling seminary with financial, enrollment, and accreditation problems.

In fact, Ellsworth said Patterson fit the four considerations the search committee felt were primary for a new president: student recruitment, faculty recruitment, financial development, and accreditation.

"Dr. Patterson's experiences in these areas are such that he will make a very fine president," Ellsworth told Baptist Press.

In recent years declining enrollment, a faculty exodus and financial struggles have plagued the seminary which was put on probation by its regional accrediting agency, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, late last year.

Two other candidates had been interviewed by the trustees' executive committee acting as the search committee, Ellsworth said. R. Albert Mohler Jr., editor of the Georgia Baptist newsjournal, *The Christian Index*, and Richard Melick, a professor at Mid-America Seminary, Memphis, Tenn., are both considered strong and active conservatives within the SBC.

Late last year Patterson declined an invitation from Jerry Falwell to (See PATTERSON on page 9)

Record amount given to Lottie Moon offering

Congratulations, Mississippi Baptists! Your sacrificial giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering has set a record for our state.

As of April 16, 1992, our people have given \$5,061,117.68 to the Lord for foreign missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering! Though we've been close to the \$5 million mark during the past two years, this is actually the first time we've reached this significant goal.

We in Woman's Missionary Union are especially thankful to be promoters of this special mission offering.

Terry Williams, Foreign Mission Board trustee from our state, also expressed his appreciation for Mississippi Baptists' "being so committed to the Lottie Moon Offering because it is so important to foreign missions. Let's keep up the good work as we continue giving to foreign missions through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering."

Marjean Patterson
executive director
Mississippi WMU

FMB appoints three Mississippi couples



Milton and Pamela Kliesch



Ricky and Cynthia Jenkins

Ricky and Cynthia Jenkins were among 38 people named missionaries by the Foreign Mission Board, SBC April 7 in Littlejohn Coliseum at Clemson (S.C.) University.

The Jenkinses will live in Mexico, where he will work with students and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries. Since 1984 he has been minister of youth at First Church, Cleveland, Tenn.

Born in Georgia, he is a former minister of youth at Highland Church, Laurel, Miss. She is the former Cynthia Epperson and was born in Tennessee.

The Jenkinses have three children, Patrick Jeremy, born in 1980; Derrick William, 1984; and Callie Alyssa, 1986.

Milton and Pamela Kliesch will live in Togo, where he will teach at the Baptist School of Theology for West Africa in Lome and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries. Since 1990 he has been pastor of New Beulah Church, Hammond, La.

Born in Magnolia, Miss., Kliesch grew up in Kentwood, La. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Seminary and has a doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Seminary.

An Alabamian, Pamela is a grad-

J. B. Gray, Franklin DOM, dies April 18 at age 74

J. B. Gray, 74, director of missions for Franklin Association, died unexpectedly April 18 at his home.



Gray

Funeral services were held April 20 at New Hope Church, Franklin County.

He had become director of missions in 1989, after retiring in 1981 from a bivocational career as principal of an elementary school in East Point, Fla. He had also been pastor of First Church in East Point and a mission

Frederick and Carolyn Sue Massingill

uate of Judson College and New Orleans Seminary and has taught school in Louisiana. She is the former Pamela Palmer. The Klieschs have served as home missionaries in Louisiana and Alaska. They have three children, Holly Leigh, born in 1982; Whitney Wyeth, 1984; and Mindy Michelle, 1988.

Frederick and Carolyn Sue Massingill will live in Senegal, where they will work as dorm par-

(See FMB on page 9)

on St. George Island.

Gray and his wife, the former Martha Jones, returned to her native Franklin County where he became active as association clerk and as interim pastor of three county churches and then interim DOM before accepting that position fulltime. The couple celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1988.

Gray was a graduate of Mississippi College with bachelor's and master's degrees in education. He was born in Tallahassee, Fla. on Jan. 19, 1918.

Survivors include his wife and a son, Thomas J. Gray.

"I will still be involved in missions"

PARKS DISCUSSES HIS PLANS TO RETIRE AS PRESIDENT OF FMB

Keith Parks announced on March 20 following a closed-door session with FMB trustees near Dallas his plans to retire in October. In a wide-ranging interview with Editor Julian Pentecost and Associate Editor Robert Dilday on March 27, Parks commented on his decision.

Q Were there any surprises in the agenda or dialogue that came of the Dallas meeting?

A One of the surprises for me was that it was a genuine spiritual experience for many of us. I thought we might just tip our hats, have a prayer and get into a knock-down, drag-out kind of discussion. But there was real, honest openness to the Lord and each other among many of us, although I wouldn't try to speak for 90 people (who were there).

Q Was there a particular point in the meeting when the decision to retire became clear?

A Yes. I went (to the meeting) still uncertain as to where I was coming out. In the first prayer session, (Henry) Blackaby (director of spiritual awakening for the Home Mission Board) was leading us and in one of the small groups that I was in we were on our knees praying and he was saying, "Are there things in your life that you're holding onto and not willing to give to Christ? What is the most precious thing you might be clinging to?"

It struck me, "Well, maybe I'm trying to hold onto my role at the Foreign Mission Board and not willing to totally commit that to the Lord." It was during that time of interchange with the Lord privately that I had a clear sense of the Lord saying, "Well, given everything, this is the time for you to do that."

That decision was reinforced negatively and positively. But it continued through the two days of the meeting to the point that by late Thursday afternoon I was sharing it with staff, and after dinner with trustees. They cut me off and said they didn't want to hear where they heard me going, but on Friday morning I shared very emphatically that this was what I was going to do.

Once I had come to that decision there was a solid sense of peace that has strengthened day by day and I haven't had any second guesses that it was the right thing to do.

I was asked in the meeting how I squared that with what I said in August (when he said he felt God's leading to remain until 1995 to carry out a new missions initiative) and my response was that my concept of what needed to be done was still there, but that one of the key ingredients in doing that was unqualified affirmation from the trustees. That just didn't come.

What has been said and written is exactly accurate, that they urged me not to retire.

At one point on Friday trustees said, "What were you about to say when you got cut off last night?" and I said, "I was going to tell you I was ready to retire and you can set the date." So one of the trustees said, "I move we set that date at 1995."

Well, immediately there were all kinds of reasons expressed why that couldn't be done: "We were not in an official session; we don't make contracts for three years; there'd be a

new board after June; we couldn't commit a new board."

It became very obvious that if I had not announced a specific retirement date, then meeting by meeting it would be rehashed and rediscussed. So with all that was said in the discussion and questions, I heard it more as their not wanting me to retire because of the possible repercussions; but I never did really hear solid affirmation of my leadership to turn me loose to do the work.

What I have repeated to the trustees is that if they couldn't find their way clear to express their trust and confidence in me, then the best thing for them is to get someone they can endorse and support and trust. My assessment is that the worst thing that could happen would be to spend the next three years haggling over details and uncertainty over the future, who's in charge and all the various suggestions of the transition committee as to how quickly we need to get a search committee.

I thought it was a pretty clear indication that they didn't plan to give me strong support or they would have voted it on the spot.

The fact that the trustees didn't affirm me there was a pretty good indication that they were trying to do something other than give total affirmation, although they didn't want to push me out of my position altogether.

Q Will trustees permit you to stay until October or will they ask you to leave earlier?

A I don't know. I struggled a bit, suggesting they set the date and they said they didn't want to do that, so I set the date in October, trying to give adequate time for an orderly transition. I told them if for any reason they thought it would be better for me to move out before then, I would welcome that. I'm not trying to hold on to October, I just want to give adequate time for transition.

I think some trustees misunderstood all along what I was trying to say about 1995. I sensed in the meeting they had come feeling I would want to do anything I could do to hold on to 1995, and some of them were prepared to structure things so they could control me a little more intensely and I wouldn't dare do anything they wouldn't like.

I tried to tell them earlier that that never was my goal. My goal was to do something and not just stay around. The same is true about the October date. I'm giving them adequate notice. If for any reason they are ready to move on before then, I certainly don't want to just hang around.

Q Should your successor as president have experience as a career missionary on the field?

A When I mentioned to the staff Monday morning (after the Dallas-Fort Worth meeting) that some of the trustees had suggested they needed someone without missions experience because they needed some fresh ideas, there was almost a gasp among my staff.

I personally feel that missionary experience would be a tremendous asset for many reasons. One, you're in a position to make much more knowledgeable decisions if you've had experience on the mission field yourself.

Another is the missionaries are more likely to accept unpleasant decisions if they know you've been where they've been and you're making decisions out of a background similar to theirs. I think it will be increasingly difficult to get missionaries to carry out decisions that they don't like if they're coming from someone with no missionary experience.

I also think it is very, very difficult to understand some of the nuances, some of the reasons for decisions. One reason I tried to travel, and urged all our key staff members to travel regularly, is that the pressures and impact of this denomination are so strong that you are unconsciously influenced to make decisions to meet denominational needs alone unless you keep fresh the awareness and reality of what's happening on the field.

I tried to go at least twice a year, sometimes three or four times a year, to sit with the missionaries, to re-experience my own understanding, to see life from their perspective. I find that going to the (SBC) Executive Committee and the (SBC) Inter-Agency Council and the Southern Baptist Convention and going to state conventions you get bombarded by pressures that begin to shape your perspective. To keep the balanced perspective of the mission field you really need to be able to renew your awareness regularly.

I don't have any question that it (missionary experience) would be tremendous asset. Someone without it is really going to struggle to make some decisions and would make more wrong decisions than one might make otherwise. It will take him a lot longer time to get a feel for what's going on.

I realize that some feel that those who have been on short-term preaching trips overseas have experience. But it is so totally different it can be worse than not having any. Because the perspective of the short-term is so different from the career missionary who plugs it out year after year, I don't feel it (a short-term mission trip) equips someone to understand the missionary mindset or the basic principles of missiology.

So it (employing a president without missionary experience) can be done and in the distant past has been done, but I think it would be a serious lack of qualification for someone to come without that experience.

There is another aspect. I don't think the calling to be a foreign missionary is superior to any other calling. But there is an intensity to that calling and a necessity of making some decisive breaks with the past that are not a part of a lot of other callings.

The implications of a foreign mission call are such that it requires a more thorough examination to be certain that this is what God is saying. We really probe missionaries at the point of their calling to be a missionary.

All of our executive staff and most of our support staff feel called to missions. For someone who has never demonstrated that calling to missions to suddenly be called to head up this missionary organization will create in the minds of some of the missionaries and others a measure of uneasiness as to whether there is the same level of commitment to missions that sent them to the field.

I am not committed to missions because I'm president of the FMB. My commitment to missions was in place before I became a missionary. I'm working at the FMB because I'm committed to missions. If that basic commitment to missions is not there, it will deprive the president of this organization of an element of understanding and identity with missionaries that will be to his disadvantage.

Q What kind of response have you received since your announcement of retirement plans?

A I've had a strong outpouring of affirmation, understanding, regret; but one of the most encouraging aspects to me is the tone of saying, "We regret it but we accept it because you said it was the Lord's leadership, and we accept it, although with grief and regret."

Q Does that indicate to you that most missionaries and staff will remain in their positions after your retirement?

A I think most missionaries on the field will stay in place. There will be some fallout, but many of them have not been and will not be personally affected for the foreseeable future. There will be more fallout in Europe, of course, because of the combination of events; but I don't expect massive resignations or great changes in the States. Most folks will go on doing what they've been doing. I don't have any question but that this organization will continue to thrive and do well.

Q Will you continue to encourage Southern Baptists to pursue their call to foreign missions through the FMB?

A I've tried to come back to my own sense of basics as to who I really am and what my calling is and what that implies for how I live out my life. I've been able to say, "The Lord called me to missions. It wasn't the FMB or the SBC or a Southern Baptist church."

The masses of the world are still lost, they still need the gospel. Although my role will change, my calling will not change. I will still be involved as constructively as possible in sharing the gospel with the world and encourage others to share the gospel.

In all honesty, I would have to say to anyone who has that same calling and that same desire, that I feel in light of all that's happening, everyone will have to find his or her own way to express that call.

Q Does the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship offer the potential to fulfill that calling for Southern Baptists?

A They have expressed a desire and their intention of providing that kind of a role for those who do not feel comfortable in serving with the FMB and they have initiated that on the European scene. Knowing some of their leadership, I certainly have respect for them and would not question their motives or desires.

Q What achievements of your tenure have given you the most satisfaction?

A One of the areas is in intercessory prayer strategy. Dr. (Baker James) Caughen (former FMB president) said on many occasions the greatest untapped resource that Southern Baptists have is prayer. That planted in my heart and mind to have that resource.

Originally the concept was to have the specific requests come from the missionaries, share them with Southern Baptists so they could pray for them and then report back to Southern Baptists how the Lord had answered their prayers. That evolved into a more aggressive part of how we do missions. There are significant happenings around the world because of the involvement of the people in an informed prayer ministry.

The second area was the transition into global planning and an approach to the whole world as a Southern Baptist foreign mission effort in a way that we had never done before. Previously, and understandably because of limitations and circumstances, we had worked mission by mission, area by area, then we added it up and said, "This is our foreign mission program."

In 1987 we made a significant transition and for the first time we said, "We as Southern Baptists have a mandate to reach the whole world. Let's try to strategize in order to channel our spiritual, human and financial resources in the most effective way and give it the highest priority levels to do the best job of reaching the whole world." We're still learning how to do that. But the efforts to do that have been one of the most significant shifts in Southern Baptist foreign missions.

Along with that is the development of a missions data base and research arm, which we had not had previously. They go hand in hand. You can't do strategizing without adequate data. The Lord has enabled us to bring together by far the most sophisticated missions data base in the world today. It is a remarkable body of information. Exceptional people work in that area.

The other part of that global approach is that as we looked at the whole world and as the data expanded our consciousness we became aware of the one-fourth of the world's population that no one knew anything about and that brought attention to the unreached people groups and restricted access areas.

Out of this has come a new networking with other Great Commission Christians to share information so we can plan in light of that information.

The nonresidential missionary approach will probably rename and redesign a little bit. It's been an exciting new program that has done remarkably well. We're refining some of the administrative rough edges to it that will make it even more effective.

Q You have been one of the strongest supporters of the nonresidential approach. The program is currently under review. Will its importance diminish after your retirement?

A I realize there is some unease on the part of some. We have had a very solid, wide-based task force working on that. They are about ready to report. They have worked through the program and it will come out in a much stronger way. (See PARKS on page 9)

Two Nigerian pastors study in Mississippi

By Betty Smith

Ninety-nine years ago the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), a non-denominational mission organization, first took the Gospel into the interior of the Sudan Empire. Part of that "interior" was Nigeria, West Africa. Several generations later, two Nigerian pastors, products of that mission endeavor, recently became members of Pineview Church, Clinton.

James Folaranmi and Ayuba Bako are studying for their doctorate at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson. Their church, the Evangelical Church of West Africa, has doctrines and practices similar to those of the Baptist church, the two men said. One exception is that pastors of ECWA are employed by the denomination and are moved from one church to another by the denomination.

Both men are second generation Christians. When Folaranmi's parents became Christians, they suffered great persecution from Muslims and those who followed the traditional religion of worshipping spirits. Folaranmi said, "As I was growing up, Christians were more isolated than persecuted."

In the traditional religion, the first-born son is dedicated to the gods. Since Folaranmi's parents were Christians, he — the first-born son — was dedicated to God. Folaranmi accepted Jesus as his Savior when he was 17, and from that day he had a great burden for lost people, especially for his friends who followed the Muslim or traditional religion. He eagerly shared his faith and began teaching Sunday School. He took a Bible correspondence course to learn more about the Bible.

In 1970, Folaranmi enrolled in the SIM Bible College, and after graduation in 1974, he was assigned as pastor of his first church, a small congregation of less than 100 members. Six months later, he was assigned to a 400-member church. In 1975 he attended SIM Seminary for three years. There he and Ayuba Bako became friends, never dreaming that a few years later the two of them would attend seminary together in the United States.

In 1978 Folaranmi became assistant pastor of a 1,000-member church, First ECWA Church of Ilorin. In 1982 he came to California, to earn a B.A. degree at Azusa Pacific University, then a M.A. from Fuller Seminary in Pasadena.

Upon returning to Ilorin in 1986, Folaranmi became senior minister of First ECWA Church and Local

Overseer of Ilorin Local Church Council, composed of nine churches in the city, all except one started from First Church. In December, 1991, when Folaranmi came to Reformed Seminary, First Church membership had grown to 3,000.

Folaranmi's wife and three children remained in Ilorin. Separation from his family is difficult, but Folaranmi feels the same burden for lost people in his homeland that he did as a 17-year-old new Christian.

Ayuba Bako is from Afana (village) Kaje (tribe) of Kaduna (state). Two uncles, one on each side of his family, were the first Christians in his village. When the uncles became Christians, they invited Bako's father, a dedicated high priest of the traditional religion, to go to church with them. He refused, but the uncles persisted. "You don't have to go inside the church," they said. "Just stand outside and see what it's like." He finally agreed, and on the next Sunday morning, he stood outside the little church, watching and listening to the singing, clapping, joyful praise of God. Later he told his brother, "I will go back to your church tonight." Eventually, Bako's father became a Christian and was as dedicated to God as he had been to the traditional religion. He served as an evangelist (lay pastor) for several years.

When Bako was six years old, his Sunday School teacher led him to accept Jesus as his Savior. In a series of events which Bako now sees as God's plan for him, he attended both the SIM Bible College and SIM Seminary.

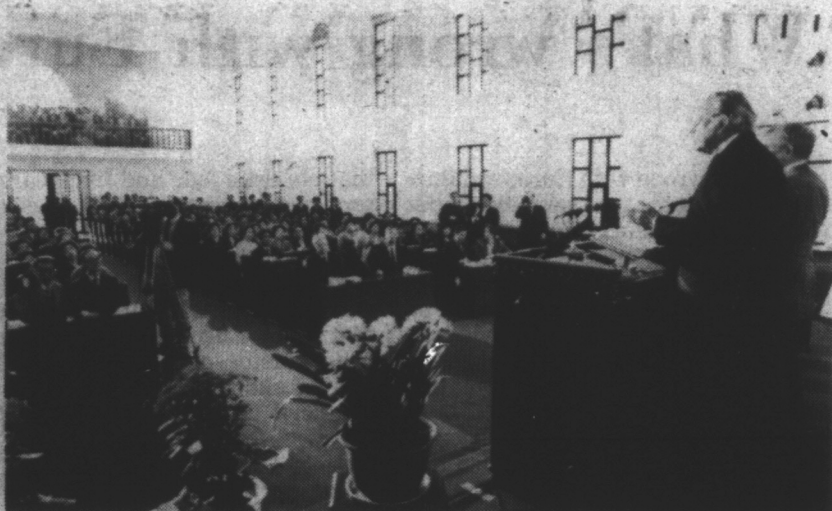
Bako and his wife had a deep burden for Muslims and prayed for a way to reach out to them with the Gospel. The answer to their prayers came when the ECWA organization asked him to accept the pastorate of Second ECWA Church in Kano, a large city in northern Nigeria, a strong Muslim area, hostile to the Christian faith.

"It was a difficult place to serve," Bako said, "and not one I would have chosen. But we felt God leading us to accept the church." In 1984, when Bako and his family moved to Kano, the church had 900 members. One ministry of the church was rural evangelism in downtown Kano and surrounding villages. When he left to come to the States in 1988, many people had accepted Jesus, weak churches in the villages had been revived, and new churches had been started. There were 1,500 members, and the church had a Christian school for

(See **NIGERIANS** on page 7)



Presenting his book *PEACE WITH GOD* to President Kim Il Sung



PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA

Overflow crowd in Bongsu Protestant Church



Kim Il Sung University



Meeting young school children

Graham ends visit to No. Korea

HONG KONG, April 6 — Evangelist Billy Graham, in a press conference here today, told the Western media that his five-day visit to North Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea), March 31-April 4, was one of the most memorable visits he has ever made to any country and that it was his prayer that his trip might have made some contribution to peace and reconciliation in this potentially dangerous part of East Asia.

During his visit Mr. Graham became the first American to speak to students at the nation's leading educational institution, Kim Il Sung University, where he spoke on the subject of the influence of religion in American society and outlined the basic beliefs of the Christian faith. The evangelist also preached in Pyongyang at the only two churches in the country — one Protestant and one Catholic — and addressed pastors, seminarians and other church leaders who had gathered from several parts of the country.

The evangelist said he was impressed with the sincere commitment and warmth of the Christians he met in North Korea and expressed his hope that these believers would grow both spiritually and in numbers in the years to come.

"They live in a society which does

not encourage religion and where it is not advantageous to be a Christian," Mr. Graham said. "They have much to teach those of us from other parts of the world about dedication and what it means to follow Jesus Christ regardless of the cost."

"The invitation to visit North Korea was a surprise to me — I felt God had opened the door for us to go," Mr. Graham said, referring to this unprecedented opportunity. "I have come, not as an emissary of my government, but as Christ's ambassador to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in your churches."

My prayer is that God will strengthen the Christians of North Korea and that the trip might make some contribution to peace in a complex and potentially dangerous part of East Asia." Stephen Linton served as Graham's interpreter.

According to Mr. Graham, North Korea is officially an atheistic country with the majority of the people believing in "Juche," an ideology which is based on self-reliance and blends spirituality with Marxism. "Juche" was developed by President Kim Il Sung with whom Mr. Graham met during his visit and who he called vigorous and magnetic leader.

During that visit, Mr. Graham delivered to the North Korean leader greetings from President Bush and a

message from Pope John Paul II. Mr. Graham said that while the details of their conversation must remain private, President Kim expressed an interest in improving relations with other countries, including the United States. The evangelist also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kim Yong Nam.

Mr. Graham found the capital city of Pyongyang to be a surprising place with many unique features not found in other cities. While there, his visit was widely followed by the North Korean media, including front-page coverage in leading newspapers.

Mr. Graham noted that for many years he had a great interest in North Korea, particularly the situation of his fellow Christians. He also had a personal reason for wanting to visit Pyongyang, as his wife, Ruth, spent three years there during the 1930s as a schoolgirl while her parents were missionaries in China.

"Most people believe in law and order — as long as they can lay down the law and give the orders." — Quote

In a little church in the far south of Ireland every window but one is of colorful art glass. Through that single exception may be seen a breath-taking

Mississippian is president of New Mexico WMU

Sandra Coker Fielding, a native of Philadelphia, Miss., is serving as president of New Mexico Woman's Missionary Union. On the national level, she serves as a vice president of Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Convention, and as a member of that Executive Board.



Fielding

Since the late 60s, the Fieldings have lived and served most of those years in churches in Arizona and New Mexico. Bethea has served as pastor of Bel Aire Church, Hobbs, N.M. since

August 1985. He is presently Chairman of the Executive Board of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico. He

is a graduate of Mississippi College. They reside at 2518 North Travis, Hobbs, New Mexico 88240.

Tallahatchie Association sponsors new church in Charleston

Faith Chapel in Charleston has been organized with 16 members — 15 by letter and one by baptism — under the sponsorship of Tallahatchie Baptist Association.

Need for a second church in Charleston, a north Mississippi town of 2,500, had been recognized for some time. Last August a mission survey "Probe" was done throughout Tallahatchie County, and a more detailed survey was recommended in northeast Charleston. On Nov. 7, First Church, Charleston and the local association teamed up to do a survey, and over 30 interested and unchurched families were discovered. Most indicated doubts that they would ever attend any large downtown church.

Already the new mission has enlisted several of the interested families in Bible study, and attendance averages in the upper 30s.



James Folaranmi (left) and Ayuba Bako, pastors from Nigeria, are studying at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson.



Brandon men roof Choctaw church

A group of Baptist Men from First Church, Brandon, recently traveled to Philadelphia to work with the Choctaw members of Corinth Church there in roofing their building. The men from the two churches were able to totally remove old shingles and replace them in one day. This was after the Corinth Church men had attended their associational Brotherhood meeting that day. The Brandon group will be going to Indiana this summer to assist with a new church building. Carlo Martello, church Brotherhood director, said that Brotherhood groups find fulfillment in missions in many ways, "for us it has been through construction." Hayes Graves, project coordinator, said his joy comes "because of the relationship that develops in working with people."

The short cut

My mind goes back to the old foot-log over the small creek that connected our place and the Flemings' place. There have been a lot of foot-logs in my life. I remember the first time I tried to walk that old log; Papa had to hold my hand and lead me across. There were other times when I had to get on my knees and crawl across. Do we not at times feel safer when we are at a loss and need spiritual guidance, to get on our knees and ask God to lead us across? Instead of worrying our heads off, take that short cut and just go to God. He has the answer.

As we travel the foot-logs and beautiful bridges of life, may we join hands together and be thankful that in this journey through life we have Someone to hold on to.

— Tom Walden

What's wrong with Europe's Baptists?

What is wrong with European Baptists? During the past several months, I have read several references in the 'letters to the editors' sections of Southern Baptists (SBC) State papers which cast a shadow of suspicion on Baptists in Europe. Uninformed persons have expressed their negative impressions of the Baptist population of this continent.

After 33 years of missionary service in Europe as a Southern Baptist missionary, I want to make the following points to describe European Baptists as I see them.

Over the centuries, Europe has not been hospitable to the people called Baptists. Stories abound in many countries of the faithfulness of individual Baptists in the face of great persecution.

Most Baptists in Europe are deeply committed to evangelism. Of course, statistics differ for each country. On the whole, it is estimated that 28 European Baptists are required to win one convert each year. This ratio compares to the 38 Southern Baptists required to win one new person to Christ in a year.

In such a comparison one must factor in the Southern Baptist practice of engaging in what some Europeans would consider doctrinally dangerous at least and "infant baptism" at worse. In Italy, Romania and elsewhere, Baptists firmly believe

that children four and five years old are far too young to be able to discern the meaning of Christian faith and should not be baptized.

The conversion statistics above are even stronger when it is understood that many European converts come from outside of Christian families. Studies show the opposite is true of Southern Baptist converts, most of whom have grown up within the church.

The fact that European Baptist churches are so few in some countries in related to historical, religious, and cultural factors, certainly not to their alleged 'liberal' theology.

European Baptists are strongly missions-minded. Many Southern Baptists in the United States are unaware of the extensive mission work carried on by European Baptists.

In most European countries, Baptist churches are full. Recently, I was shocked to read one 'letter to the editor' in a Southern Baptist state paper. The letter contained a reference to "Europe's empty Baptist churches." The writer seemed to infer that the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon Switzerland, European Baptists' only international seminary, was responsible for the 'emptiness' of the churches in Europe. It was good, the writer asserted, that the Foreign Mission Board's trustees

had finally defunded this liberal seminary.

The extent of this person's misinformation is incredible.

Having lived and worked in Europe as a Southern Baptist missionary for 33 years, I categorically reject this person's evaluation. As a matter of fact, the exact opposite is true.

I have visited large and small Baptist churches in most European countries. They were located in urban as well as rural areas in both Western and Eastern Europe.

In none of my travels so far have I found 'empty' Baptist churches.

European Baptists take very seriously the manner of a person's repentance, conversion, and baptism. Before they will proceed to baptize someone, European believers prefer to see signs of genuine conversion. The result of this attitude, much more cautious than the average Southern Baptist church, is that often more people attend Sunday morning services and even weekday meetings than actually belong to the church. A local church may have 100 members, for example, but regularly see 150 in worship services on Sunday.

The Baptists of Europe, both East and West, are on the move, and Southern Baptists would do well to recognize this fact.

MKs cannot afford new school's high fees in Bangkok, Thailand

The International School Bangkok, which has provided English-language education for the expatriate community of Bangkok, Thailand, since 1951, has opened a new campus in a suburb near the airport.

The international college-preparatory school is coeducational, from kindergarten through grade 12. Enrollment has ranged from 35 to 3,650. Today there are 1,900 students of 52 nationalities.

Seventy-nine MKs (missionary kids) from the Thailand Baptist Mission have graduated from ISB since 1967. Moving to the new Samakee Campus, however, increased school fees many fold, making it impossible for these MKs to continue attending ISB.

Some of the MKs are attending a Christian school in Malaysia (Dalat

School) and some are attending Ruam Rudi International School in Bangkok. Others are attending a small Christian school where the mothers are doing the teaching (but the teaching is set up on a school system). Some are doing home schooling.

The new campus (called Samakee) is four times the size of the former campus. Its range of facilities makes it the best equipped international school in Asia.

The 600 million baht (US \$24,000,000) complex includes separate elementary, middle, and high school.

ISB is a private nonprofit educational institution operated by the International School Association under a charter from Thailand's Ministry of Education.

Off the Record

"Seems to me your girl is kind of spoiled."

"Tain't that at all. It's just the perfume she's wearing." — Lion

There was an old lady who never said anything bad about anybody. One day someone said to her, "Grandma, I believe you would have something good to say about the devil himself!" "Well," responded the old lady, "I must say he be an industrious fellow."

A mother was scolding her little boy. "How often must I say to keep your eyes closed when your father is asking the blessing at the table?"

"Yes, ma'am, but how do you know that I don't?"

Every morning for 15 years he had gotten up at 6 a.m. to take his dog for a walk around the block. One evening the dog died. The next morning at 6 a.m. the man woke up. He lay there, miserable. Finally, he leaned over and shook his wife. When she awoke he asked:

"Wanna go for a walk?"

The professor of chemistry was giving a lesson on the powers of different explosives.

"This," he explained, "is one of the most dangerous explosives of them all. If I am in the slightest degree wrong in my experiment, we are liable to be blown through the roof. Kindly come a little closer, so that you may follow me better."

A young taxi driver and an old priest waited together by heaven's gate. The taxi driver was called to enter into Paradise, and after a long while, the gate opened for the priest.

"Why did the taxi driver get in first?" he asked, and he heard his reply, "When you were preaching, everybody slept, but in his car, everybody prayed."



MAKING ENDS MEET — Lidia Patricia Guitan of Nicaragua grimaces as smoke rises from the wood fire under a pot of cornmeal. The meal will be made into tortillas. In the economic hard times most Nicaraguans face, many families make and sell items like tortillas to get by. In the background are her father, Armando Guitan, and her brother, Jorge Luis Guitan. The family allows their yard to be used for a weeknight worship service sponsored by nearby Galilea Baptist Church in Managua. (BP) Photo by Charles Ledford



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Thursday, April 23, 1992

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Is the world better because I was here?

Crawling out of bed at 5 a.m. and leaving town at 6:30 a.m. is not too high a price, in my account book. Especially if you spend the day in the sunshine, admiring the "Charm Spot of the Deep South." Riding the Van Winkle Church bus eight hours round trip is bone wearying, I grant you, but I'd go again tomorrow for the good fellowship with the Young-at-Heart Club, and their guests.

Tom Walden, a member of Van Winkle Church, invited W. D. and me to go with them to Bellingrath. Along the way, we stopped near Lucedale to visit the Palestinian Gardens. New grass grew green on the banks of "the River Jordan," and red azaleas blossomed beside "the synagogue in Capernaum." A friendly yellow cat followed us along the shores of the "Sea of Galilee."

Since it was noon by the time we reached Mobile, we stopped at a restaurant to eat catfish and chocolate pie (or that's what I ate) to stockpile energy for the afternoon.

Almost 100 years ago, on Oct. 16, 1892, a young man named Walter Bellingrath wrote a letter to his mother. It contained this promise: "By God's help, I am going to try and make the world better and brighter by my

being here."

In 1918, Walter and his wife, Bessie, bought a parcel of land on the Fowl River in south Alabama near Theodore, for use as a fishing lodge. Dreaming of "making the world brighter," they determined to turn the beautiful semi-tropical place into a garden that would draw people from around the globe. They studied gardens in America and Europe, and began work. Their garden opened to the public in 1932.

In 1950, the non-profit Bellingrath-Morse Foundation was formed, with certain churches and church-related educational institutions as beneficiaries. Colleges and churches that receive money from the Foundation include Rhodes at Memphis, Huntington at Montgomery, and Stillman at Tuscaloosa, and Central Presbyterian and St. Francis Methodist in Mobile. It is "for the upbuilding of young men and women and the perpetuation of Christian values recognized by our forefathers for the building of a great nation."

At Bellingrath Gardens, every season has its star. In late March, azaleas were in their glory, 250,000 plants of 200 varieties, pink, fuchsia, red, white, salmon, except for a few

that a heavy rain had crushed.

In the Oriental Garden, ducks swam in the stream under arched bridges. Wistaria dangled in white tendrils from a potted tree.

Blossoming cherry trees were mirrored in a lake, and far out in the river, fish leapt high out of the water. On terraces behind the Bellingrath home, round dianthus beds in pinks and reds competed with pansies and ajuga that sprouted from a stone wall. But enough! I could never describe it all.

Perhaps if you meet some of my fellow travellers, they would be glad to tell you more about it. They were:

Jimmy and Becky Martin, Van and Dolores Johnsey, Mildred Holmes, Margie and Tom Walden, Ruby Booth, Louise Bailey, Edna and Dan Weaver, Jewel Morris, Arietta Smith, Mary Chancellor, Pearl Bishop, Kathryn Wilson, Dot White, Mildred Brister, Ethelene Tullis, Lamar and Bernice Ashley, Mertice McKay, Mildred Pace, Rose Mary Walters, Ann Scott, Charlotte Pilgrim, Vadie Gibson, and the driver, Milton Fortenberry.

Walter, I would say, achieved his goal. Would that I, by God's help, might by being here make the world a better and brighter place.

Peggy Broome retires

Peggy Broome began working for the Baptist Record in 1955, after I did in 1953. Since then, she and I have watched a lot of Baptist Building employees come and go. Together we have weathered a lot of ups and downs — and we're still friends!

Peggy worked for the Record under editors Goodrich and Fields. Then in 1959 she became switchboard operator and later moved to Support Services as mail clerk. Except for three brief periods when she left for the birth of her two sons and then during the illness and death of her youngest, she has been one of us.

"The Baptist Building family is so close," she said. "They take care of you."

Now she says she's retiring at the end of April, to be with her own family more. She said, "I have to keep reminding myself, 'This is it, Peggy. You're not coming back this time.' Now, too, she can have the time to travel in the mountains, as she likes to do — maybe listen to her favorite country music as she rides! A party is to be held in her honor in the Skyroom of the Baptist Building on Friday, April 24.

Her supervisor in the mail room, Fran Pickett, said, "As mail room clerk, she has been the person behind the scenes who has kept the mail flowing smoothly and on time. That's doing good for someone overseeing the mailing of approximately five million metered pieces of mail and approximately ten million pieces of bulk mail since starting to work in the mail room."

She was born the daughter of Odus (Red) and Evie Mae Hines on April 5, 1930 at D'Lo, Miss. Her only sister, Patsy Irwin, who formerly worked in the state Sunday School Department, wrote in a poem: "Two small girls, one blonde hair, one with brown curls, playing, exploring; Mom and Dad, glad when day was through, being apples of their eyes, beamed when someone mentioned their girls. Poor in material things, holding on to love in our hearts, Mom patched our faded clothes; Dad sewed worn shoes into the night; like strong links of a chain, we were secure, not to be taken apart..."

Peggy married James H. (Tab) Broome of Braxton at D'Lo Baptist church on Sept. 2, 1956, a year after W.D. and I married at First Church, Jackson. As "young marrieds" we four enjoyed picnicing on the Natchez Trace, before Barnett Reservoir was ever built.

Most major events of her early life, in fact, took place at D'Lo. It was where she was baptized at age 12 by Herman Milner and where she finished high school. Her only other job before MBCB days was with F. W. Woolworth.

Not long after they married, she and Tab bought a house in Pearl at 303 Lionel Road. At First Church, Pearl, he has served as a deacon and she teaches a women's Sunday School



Peggy Broome

class which has increased from 3 or 4 to 20 members, under her leadership. Before his retirement, Tab worked for the City of Pearl.

Their son Jimmy, age 34, works with a roofing company. Her dad, who lived with them for a long time after her mother died in 1969, now lives at Crossgates Manor.

Friendly, loyal, helpful Peggy has a good sense of humor. Fortunately. Once while she was working at the switchboard in the old Baptist Building on Congress Street, W. R. Roberts came into the building one morning and spoke to the preacher sitting on the couch in the lobby waiting to see Dr. Quarles. Thinking that the man was Tab, he said, "Why don't you just go over there and give that girl a good whipping?" At the man's shocked expression, he took a second look and saw he'd made a mistake.

The white-haired, blue-eyed Peggy has a soft and caring heart, too, and is always doing something for others, in her family and also for her fellow workers, or for anyone she feels is in need. For instance, once a woman came into the building with a sob story about her husband "who is in the hospital and just had his leg amputated, and I don't know how I'm going to pay the bills or even have enough to eat" and so forth. Peggy went to all the offices and collected money for the woman, but when she told the story to Dr. Odle he was suspicious and had someone follow the woman when she left. She walked directly to her apartment, where her husband was sitting waiting for her — with one leg, yes, but not in the hospital or even sick.

In her own life, I'm sure, the hardest experience she has ever had to live through was when her Jeff died on Dec. 19, 1974, the day after his eighth birthday, as a result of encephalitis. He was a sweet and courageous little boy. "Every day, Jeff and I would read together the 23rd Psalm," she remembers. "The Lord gives you strength and wisdom to do what you have to do."

In years ahead, Peggy, may He give you much joy! As Patsy wrote, "Today you begin a new path, another era of life, a journey unknown. You have achieved your goals; now enjoy your time. It's time to rest."

What would J. B. Gambrell say if he preached at Pleasant Ridge again?

By Anne W. McWilliams

Pleasant Ridge Church, Union County, got a new baptistry scene in time for her 150th anniversary celebration the first week of April. Tom Dulaney of Fulton painted the river and mountains.

Most famous of Pleasant Ridge's sons was baptized in 1856 when he was 15. The church had been organized in 1842, in what was once Tippah County. James Bruton Gambrell, con-

verted during "a protracted meeting," and asked to give his experience, said, "I am just a sinner saved by grace." Later he was pastor at Pleasant Ridge (1869-70), first editor of the Baptist Record, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, etcetera.

Perhaps Gambrell was baptized at the spring down the hill behind the church where a dogwood was blooming last week. Claude Smith, 92, the church's oldest next to Addie Watson, said the spring was once used as the church's baptistry, though he himself was baptized in 1916, in a pond.

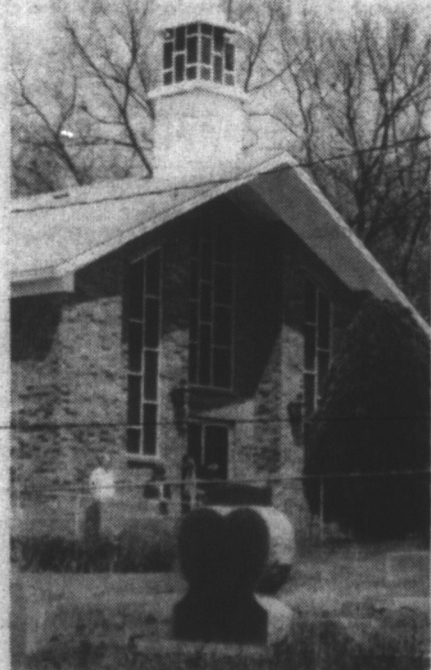
This present building, the third, has been remodeled, added to, and redecorated several times. Its 1921 brick veneer was said to be the first of its kind in north Mississippi. Its education addition recently got a new blue carpet to match newly blue-painted walls. Antique Sunday School Bible teaching pictures, given in 1941 by Ruby and Willie Melton, received new frames.

Of the second building (erected 1869) a tornado on April 20, 1920 left nothing but splinters. The storm even blew away some of the tombstones from the cemetery and mixed up some of the others so no one knew to which graves they belonged. The large sprawling cemetery has former slaves buried in it. A dog, Happy, has his little tombstone in the Wells family lot.

Due to Federal raids and other misfortunes of the War Between the States, the first building fell down. In 1865, Elder Lewis Ball reorganized the church, with 76 members, in a school house.

In early days, a rigid schedule of discipline was practiced, according to Claude Smith's findings. During Saturday afternoon conference meetings, "many members were accused of drinking, dancing, using

(See PLEASANT RIDGE on page 9)



Pleasant Ridge Church



David and Cyndi Blackwell and Claude Smith.

NIGERIANS

From page 5

kindergarten through sixth grade.

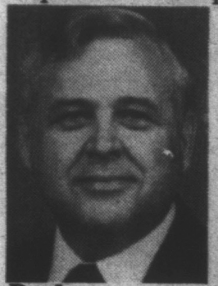
In 1987 persecution of Christians by Muslims became more open and widespread. More than 62 churches were burned. Christians were killed. Used tires were thrown on the head of some pastors, drenched in gasoline, and set afire. But in spite of extreme hardship and persecution, people continued to respond to the Gospel. Bako said, "Persecution made Christians and churches stronger."

In 1988 Bako and his wife, along with

five of their six children, came to Springfield, Missouri, where he obtained a B.A. degree from Baptist Bible College and a M.S. degree from Southwest Missouri State University. In August, 1991, Bako enrolled in the Reformed Seminary in Jackson, to begin study for his doctorate. At the end of three years, Bako plans to return to Nigeria to continue to spread the Gospel among his fellow-Nigerians. He said, "Christians in Nigeria need prayer from American Christians as they continue to live in dangerous and difficult circumstances."

Staff changes

Immanuel Church, Hattiesburg, has called **Nathan Barber** as pastor. Barber previously served as pastor of First, Bay St. Louis for 18 years. He also served Calvary Church, Lamar Association. He is a graduate of William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife Pat have three sons.



Edwards Church, Hinds-Madison Association, has called **Tommy M. May** as pastor effective April 6. A native of Mendenhall, he attended Copiah-Lincoln, New Orleans Seminary, and is a senior at Luther Rice Bible College. His previous place of service was East Morton Church.

West Union Church, Carriere, has called **Eric Kachur** as minister of music and youth effective April 26. His previous place of service was West End Church, West Point. Billy Dowdy is pastor of West Union Church.

Argicola Church, Lucedale, has called **Bruce L. Worrell** as pastor. His previous place of service was First Church, Central, Baton Rouge, La. A native of Ackerman, he received his education at William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary.



First Church, Soso, has called **Paul Wilson** as pastor effective April 5. He was formerly pastor of Priceville Church, Tupelo.

Blue Mountain will host April alumni day

Ministerial Alumni Day of Blue Mountain is planned for April 24. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. Kara Blackard will speak at 10 a.m. chapel service, and Jim Futral will speak at the luncheon. Music will be presented by a group from the West Jackson Street Church, Tupelo. A golf tournament will follow the luncheon.

First, Durant, holds lay renewal weekend

First Church, Durant, will have lay renewal weekend, April 24-26. The times are Friday, 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and 6 p.m.; Sunday, 9:45 a.m. to noon and 6 p.m.

"A fair-weather friend is one who is always around when he needs you." — R. Florencia

Revival dates

First, Corinth: April 26-29; Robert L. Hamblin, Tupelo, evangelist; Roger Cowen, Louisville, Ky., music evangelist; services, Sunday, 10:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon services and 7 p.m.; Dennis H. Smith, pastor.

First, Crystal Springs: April 26-29; Sun.-Wed., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; James M. Richardson, Madison, evangelist; Rick Greene, Daniel Memorial, Jackson, music; Joel Haire, pastor.

Providence, Hattiesburg: April 26-29; Alan Woodard, First, Ellisville, evangelist; Kerry Kelley, Elkdale, Selma, Ala., music; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Clifford Lazenby, pastor.

North McComb, McComb: April 26-29; Wayne Kimbrough, Tylertown Church, Tylertown, evangelist; Tom Moak, Bogue Chitto, music; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Ken Kirk, pastor.

Harmony, Cruger: April 27-May 1; Tommy Clark, Mount Olive, Blackhawk, evangelist; Ken Jower, pastor, Harmony, music; 7:30 nightly.

First, Houlika: April 26-29; James Ruffin, Poplar Springs Drive, Meridian, evangelist; Don Buchanan, Houston, music; Sunday, regular times; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Rick Burton, pastor.

Bunker Hill, Columbia: April 26-29; Matt Buckles, consultant, Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries, MCB, Jackson, evangelist; Paul Powell, Bunker Hill Church, music; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; James T. Ray, III, pastor.

Stonewall (Clarke): April 26-30; C. C. Burns, Knights Valley

Church, Enterprise, evangelist; Arlis Nichols, Harpersville, music; services, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Albert McMullen, pastor.

Barefoot Springs, Pelahatchie: April 26-29; Sunday 11 a.m., dinner on grounds, and 7 each evening; Jerome McLendon, evangelist; Gene Rester, music; Grant McElveen, pastor.

Good Hope, Lena: April 24-26; Garland McKee, director, Evangelism Department, MCB, Jackson, evangelist; Edward Dowell, Good Hope, music; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m. worship, 11 a.m., 6, and 7 p.m.; Brent Causey, pastor.

Calvary, Belzoni: April 27-May 1; Charles Shipman, West Helena, Ark., evangelist; Rob Pelkey, Bruce, music; 7 nightly; Robert Andrews, pastor.

Ford's Creek, Poplarville: April 26-29; David Grisham, Community Church, Columbus, evangelist; Larry Robertson, Steep Hollow Church, Poplarville, music; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on grounds, afternoon service, and 7 nightly; Mike Priest, pastor.

Liberty (Mississippi): April 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Robert Goode, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, music; Michael Glenn, pastor.

Mt. Creek, Florence: April 26-29; Billy Foley, New Albany, evangelist; Ron Lacaz, Goodrum Church, Vicksburg, music; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Robert E. Walker, pastor.

Sidon (Leflore): April 26-30; Sunday, 11 a.m., lunch following, and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7:30 p.m.; Ron Meyers, First, Zion, Ill.,

evangelist; Gary and Linda Lewis, Mount Olive, Coila, music.

Springfield, Madden: April 26-May 1; Billy Hollifield, Main Street, Hattiesburg, evangelist; Charlie Case, Philadelphia, music; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Johnny Beaver, pastor.

First, Lake: April 26-May 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Gene Henderson, First, Brandon, evangelist; Jimmy McCaleb, Day Star, Florence, music; Ken McLemore, pastor.

Midway, Jackson: April 26-29; Sunday, 10:15 a.m. and 7 p.m. nightly; speakers: Sunday, Wayne Burkes, Highway Commissioner, Clinton; Mon., Chuck Hampton, Flora; Tues., Stan Rushing, Shepherd's Staff, Jackson; and Wed., Fred Tarpley, Madison; Scott Gallahe, Midway, music; David Wilkinson, pastor.

Immanuel, Natchez: April 26-29; golden anniversary; Donald Bennett, founder of Immanuel, evangelist; Ed Pickle, music; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.

Wynndale, Terry: April 26-28; family life revival; Carl T. Dickerson, pastor, Magnolia Church, Laurel, evangelist; Sunday, 6-8 p.m.; Mon. and Tues., 7-9 p.m.; Charles Gentry, pastor.

Center Ridge, Yazoo City: April 26-29; Lynn Nations, First, Mize, evangelist; Hubert Greer, Brookhaven, music; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bryan Abel, pastor.

West Drew (Sunflower): April 26-29; Jimmy McClendon, evangelist, and Mrs. Jimmy McClendon, music, Linn Church, Doddsville; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Marvin D. Bibb, pastor.

Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong offerings

East Booneville, Booneville, on April 5 set a goal of \$1,000 and \$1,467.28 was received. Jim Holcomb is pastor.

Siloam Church, Clay County, received \$2,618.86 for Lottie Moon and \$845 for Annie Armstrong. Avery Jones is pastor.

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The newly-elected 1992 officers for the Fellowship of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists, are left to right: Brad Jones, Meridian, secretary-treasurer; Myrna Loy Hedgepeth, Jackson, vice president; and Kenny Digby, Fulton, president.

PLEASANT RIDGE

From page 7

profane language, and other causes, and some even reported themselves. A committee was sent to investigate the ones who did not report. If the accused acknowledged the charge and asked the church to bear with them, they were forgiven. If not, they were excluded."

Pleasant Ridge has sent an unusual number into the ministry — at least seven preachers and a minister of music who are still living and in service: Martin Williams, Carthage; Lyndle Davis, Blue Mountain; Rex Yancey, Pascagoula; Larry Hill, Red Bay, Ala.; Bill Bell, Dumas; Alvie Isaac, Haleyville, Ala.; Charles Smith, Ingomar; and Jerry Beaty (music), Donelson, Tenn.

Jennifer Sanford, another Pleasant Ridge member, served last summer as a volunteer missionary teaching English in China (with Global Outreach) and plans to return this fall.

"We always had good preachers, who taught sound doctrine," said Smith. Of 37 pastors, 12 are still living: E. S. Hall, Vicksburg, who served 10 years on "the Ridge"; Clarence O. Smith, Dundalk, Md.; Jim Futral, Broadmoor, Jackson, a former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention; Roy K. Marshall, Corinth; Jimmy Porter, McComb; Robert Hill, Cleveland; Duail Corbitt, New Albany; Dwight Faulkenberry, Greenville; Kermit McGregor, pastor,

First, Mendenhall, and former public relations director, Baptist Children's Village, who probably was the church's youngest pastor, going there at age 17; Ray Jernigan, New Albany; Johnny Parks, Kosciusko; and David Blackwell, present pastor.

Blackwell, who moved to Pleasant Ridge from Gooden Lake in 1989, said, "There is a warm spirit of fellowship; folks who are very committed; and no churchwide conflicts. The men take a spiritual leadership role." His wife, Cyndi, added, "WMU members are quick to jump in and help people in the community." Present membership is around 320 resident, of a total 555. Shawn Davis, junior at Blue Mountain College, is minister of music and youth.

A former pastor, the late Will Darling, married Claude Smith and Vena Mae Shirley when they were 25. They eloped in Smith's new car, a T-Model for which he paid \$465. Smith, born

April 15, 1900, has lived through almost two-thirds of the church's history, which he has researched and written. A former school teacher of 36 years and a farmer, he lives with his wife about three miles from the church. Their son, Wayne of New Albany, led the singing one night during the April 5-12 celebration.

Most remarkable, he has taught Sunday School at Pleasant Ridge for 70 years and been its treasurer for 37 years.

Last year, Maxine Mroz of the New Albany Gazette wrote him up as the paper's "Father of the Year" and another Pleasant Ridge member, Maxine Cook, as "Mother of the Year." Mrs. Cook is an administrator of New Haven School where she works with special education children.

"This has always been a peaceful church," said Larry Hill, former member, "all moving in the same direction."

National Music Week will be observed May 3-10

"Music — A Gift to Develop" is the theme of the 69th annual National Music Week, to be observed May 3-10. The special week was first observed in 1924, and since 1959 has been sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs, a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of music. The objective of National Music Week is to create an understanding and appreciation of the value of music in the home, community, nation, and world.

Charles M. Tremaine, who headed the National Bureau for the Advance-

ment of Music, was the founder of Music Week. Since 1924, when President Calvin Coolidge served as the first honorary chairman, each of our nation's chief executives has given his moral support to the annual observance of National Music Week.

As a part of the observance of National Music Week, churches are encouraged to use the hymn of the month, "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus," on May 3, according to Myrna Loy Hedgepeth, chairperson of the Jackson McDowell Music Club.

FMB

From page 3

ents for children at Dakar Academy and will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

They attend Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Recently he was administrative officer of the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee for the Office on Aging in Knoxville, Tenn.

Born in Birmingham, Ala., he grew up in Jackson and Kosciusko, Miss. He is a graduate of Mississippi State

University and previously was an administrative analyst for the Tennessee Valley Authority in Knoxville.

Born in Laurel, Miss., she grew up in Jackson, where Van Winkle Church was influential in her Christian growth. She is the former Carolyn Sue Smith. She attended Hinds Community College and Carson-Newman College.

The Massengills have a daughter, Rebecca, and a son, Michael.

All three couples will go to Rockville, Va. in June for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.

PARKS

From page 4

Q What have been some of the greatest frustrations during your tenure?

A Just as we were in the process of launching Bold Mission Thrust (Southern Baptists' plan to share the gospel with everyone on earth by 2000), just at a time when potentially we as Southern Baptists had the commitment to missions, the personnel, the resources, the scope and size of our denomination, we had evolved the plan most likely to succeed in reaching the world. Even some non-Baptists have told us that.

Just as all this was in place and beginning to happen, our denomination diverted its energies to spend time in political maneuvering. Bold Mission Thrust has never received the kind of convention-wide affirmation from elected (SBC) leadership that would have been necessary for it to have taken off. It has not been the consuming passion of those who have been shaping the agenda and leading Southern Baptists over the past decade. It has not received the kind of strong, forceful public affirmation

it deserved. It has not received the kind of modeling from churches of those in leadership.

The mobilization of Southern Baptists to fulfill Bold Mission Thrust never did happen the way it could have and should have. I believe we as a people will give an account to the Lord. Our failure to find a way to put aside our differences and rally around this concept of reaching the world is one of the great tragedies of this last decade.

Q How have your wife, Helen Jean, and four children responded to your decision to retire?

A Both Helen Jean and I have had a real sense of peace. We both feel very right and secure about it. I say "we" deliberately because it was and is a joint decision.

The children have been very affirming. We shared thoroughly with them prior to the February (FMB) meeting and prior to the March meeting (in Dallas-Fort Worth). It's been one of the serendipities to find yourself on the counseling end of a relationship with grown children. Their prayer, dialogue and participation are meaningful.

PATTERSON

From page 3

become president of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. On Oct. 28, 1991, trustees of Criswell College voted to fire Patterson as president but he was later reinstated following protests by students, alumni and high-profile SBC pastors.

Patterson has been president of the 335-student Criswell College in Dallas since 1975. He also is a trustee of the Foreign Mission Board.

Patterson and his wife, Dorothy, have two children: Armour, 23, and Carmen, 22.

Hollinger is director of BP.

Re: BR deadlines

The new deadline for news articles submitted by churches and individuals is Thursday noon, the week before date of publication. This is with the exception of "Revival Dates," which can be accepted no later than Friday noon of the week before publication.

These changes are necessary because of the paper's change-over to desktop publishing.

Advertising deadline for reserving space is two weeks in advance of publication date and must be in our office ten days prior to the issue date in which this ad is to appear.

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Larry Salter, MBCB, Jackson

Mon., April 27, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church, Greenville

Tues., April 28, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Briarwood Drive Baptist Church, Jackson

Wed., April 29, 9:30 - 12 noon

First Baptist Church, McComb

Thurs. April 30, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church, Wiggins

Leaders

Bob Buckner, Crossgates Church, Brandon
Mark Seanor, First Baptist Church, Roswell, Ga

Mon., April 27, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church, Horn Lake

Tues., April 28, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

East Corinth Baptist Church, Corinth

Wed., April 29 - 9:30 - 12 noon

First Baptist Church, Columbus

Thurs., April 30 - 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

38th Avenue Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

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Just for the Record



First Church, Byhalla, honored Jeff and Nell Ginn and daughter, Anna, appointees to Cali, Colombia, before they left for language school in Costa Rica. At a fellowship dinner following the morning service they were presented a poster-size card featuring Colombia, which opened to members' signatures and a money gift of over \$400. Pictured are George Bristow, Brotherhood director; Waurene Going, WMU director; Nell, Jeff, and Anna Ginn; and Glenn E. Bien, pastor.



The Singing Churchmen will have a two-concert tour on April 27 and 28. April 27, First Church, Newton, will be the host church. The churchmen will sing at Poplar Springs Church, Meridian on April 28. Both concerts will begin at 7 p.m. Milfred Valentine is director. Officers pictured above for the coming year are, from left, front row: Lewis Oswalt, central director; Keith Bennett, secretary; Ed Brashier, president; James Francis, president-elect; Gil Powell, publicity director; second row, Leon Bedsole, south director; Darryl Prater, instrumental director; Perry Robinson, handbell director; Tanner Riley, missions; and Graham Smith, director, Church Music Department. Not pictured is Ray Burke, north director.

Homecomings

Crowder (North Delta): April 26; 10 a.m.; E. P. Baldwin, Corinth, guest speaker; Joe Meurrier, Batesville, music; dinner in family life center; Harvey Sewell, pastor.

Southside, Greenville: April 26; 11 a.m.; Archie Goodwin, Louisiana, guest speaker; Jasper Butler, music; dinner on grounds at noon; singing, 1:30 p.m.; Earl Ezell, pastor.

Goss, Columbia: April 26; Porter Buckley, guest speaker for morning services; covered dish luncheon and afternoon singing will follow in Family Life Center.

Puckett (Rankin): April 26; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall at noon; Hayes Graves, Brandon, guest speaker; Barry Ward, pastor.

Bethsaida, Philadelphia: April 26; Kermit Sharp, morning message; covered dish lunch and singing in auditorium at 1:30 p.m. with the Pearl Quartet.

Silver Springs (Pike): April 26; Joel Stroud will bring message at 11 a.m.; noon meal served in fellowship hall; the Glory Land Singers will have charge of program at 1:30 p.m., Lenny Miller is pastor.

Harmony (Carroll): April 26; 10:30 a.m.; Ken Gower, pastor, will preach; Gayle Gower, Memphis, soloist; dinner on grounds; Harmony Cemetery Association annual business meeting after lunch.

Gum Grove, Brookhaven: April 26; high attendance day in Sunday School at 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Lonnie Case, pastor, Pearlhaven, Brookhaven, speaker; lunch in fellowship hall at noon; the Magnolia State Quartet will sing at 1:30 p.m. Sammy J. McDonald III, pastor.

Bond Church, Philadelphia: April 26; 11 a.m., followed by dinner in the fellowship hall; afternoon singing, the Southern Cross, 1:30 p.m.; afternoon worship, 2:30; no night services; D. W. Green, pastor.

Pleasant Ridge Church, Sturgis, will host a gospel singing by The Barnett Family of Stanton, Tenn., on April 25 at 7:30 p.m. An offering will be taken.

First Church of Byram, Hinds-Madison Association, will dedicate its Family Life Center and have a churchwide picnic, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Samford will host alumni receptions

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Samford University alumni and friends will have two opportunities to greet each other this spring — at dessert parties in Indianapolis, Ind., June 10 during the Southern Baptist Convention, and in Fort Worth, Texas on May 1 during the meeting of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Samford celebrates its 150th anniversary this year.

Ferrell Cork retires

Ferrell O. Cork Jr., pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson, will retire April 30 after 40 years of ministry.

Van Winkle will honor him April 26 with a recognition service during the morning worship and a reception that afternoon.

Cork will move to Tupelo and begin a preaching ministry there. His new address will be 1911 Pheasant Run, Tupelo, MS 38801.

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PART-TIME DIRECTOR of ACTIVITIES needed. Deadline for resume is April 30, 1992. Send to North Calvary Baptist Church, Activities Search Committee, 922 Pecan Avenue, Philadelphia, MS 39350.

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Names in the news



Lou (Bickie) Pennington (right) was ordained to the gospel ministry on Jan. 5 by Tishomingo Church at the request of Forest Grove Church. Pennington and his wife, Vickie, are natives of Tishomingo County. Eugene Tennison (left) is interim pastor at Tishomingo Church.

Melvin R. Wilson has been appointed Chief Chaplain of the Veterans Administration Medical

Center in Philadelphia, Penn., effective April 27. Wilson has served as staff chaplain at the V.A. Medical Center in Jackson for 11 years. A native of Arkansas, Wilson has served as a past president of Mississippi Baptist Chaplain's Association.

Michelle Manguno, a freshman at William Carey College, was crowned Miss Dixieland on March 28. She will compete in the Miss Mississippi Pageant on July 11. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Manguno.

G. Temp Sparkman, 60, has submitted his resignation as professor at Midwestern Seminary. He was granted medical leave through July 31, with retirement effective Aug. 1.



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LIFE AND WORK

Hear and heed his message



By Lola M. Antry
Revelation 1:1-8

According to those who deal in such matters a person remembers what he hears during a sermon better than the closing remarks. Andrew Stern, a former ABC News staffer, telephoning TV viewers after a newscast, found that over half of those who had listened could not recall even one of the show's 19 items. Our lesson focuses on the overcoming of these universal faults by faithful attention to and action upon God's message. The message today concerns the revelation of the risen Lord.

The source of the Revelation (vv. 1-2). Jesus is the source. John is the receiver of the message that is to be passed on. The deliverer is an angel.

The prerequisite for divine blessing (v. 3). Three important points are mentioned in this verse. They all pertain to the way of receiving the message and of utilizing it. Three groups of people are mentioned: the reader, the hearer, and the keeper. Not everyone who reads the Word is a keeper. All hearers are not keepers. Only those who read or hear the Word and keep it will be blessed.

The superiority of the Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 4-5a). This greeting from John emphasizes the Who of Jesus. Jesus is faithful; the first begotten of the dead; the prince of the kings of the earth. No other, living or dead, can qualify for his position. He is the Messiah-King who is able to overcome all things.

The redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 5-6). John refers to the supreme sacrifice Jesus made on the cross that our sins might be cleansed. The physical suffering of Jesus was horrendous, but the spiritual separation from the Father was the greater torture. He knew what it meant to be one with the Father. We often associate with him in a most casual manner. This must be offensive and heart-breaking to him. While on earth Jesus and disciples were very close. In John 17:11 he prays for all who are his that they may be one even as he and the Father are one. How then, can we reconcile our behavior of distancing the Father in our lives? Do we praise him as John does in verse 6? "To him be the glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

The Lord's coming in glory (vv. 7-8). John explains how Jesus will return and who will witness that return. "Behold, he cometh with clouds." The cloud was a particular sign and symbol of the Lord's presence to his chosen people, Israel. On the Mount of Transfiguration a voice spoke out of a cloud and proclaimed Jesus as "my beloved Son." Acts 1:9a, speaking of Christ's ascension, says, "And a cloud received him out of their sight." As he ascended from earth to heaven so will he return. At his ascension only those close to him were present. At his return everyone will see him; those who loved him, those who neglected him, those who persecuted him, those who betrayed him, those who pierced him, you and I. Every eye shall see him. Are you listening? Have you heeded his Word?

In verse 8, Jesus affirms himself, who he is. He lists his qualifications: Beginning, End, Always has been, Is, Always will be, the Almighty.

Hearing and listening are not necessarily the same. We are bombarded by sounds. We either tune in or out. A listening session is not enough. Two other requirements must be met. The first is remembering what we hear. The second is heeding or acting upon what we hear. If everyone was the kind of Christian you are, what kind of world would this be?

Antry lives in Hickory Flat, and is a member of Pine Grove Church.

BIBLE BOOK

Paul's Spirit-led ministry



By Charles Nestor
2 Corinthians 3:1-8, 12-18

Apparently there were teachers coming to Corinth who brought letters of recommendation. These teachers probably came from the church in Jerusalem. It appears that their view of ministry differs from the ministry of Paul. The appearance of these teachers was producing controversy in the Corinthian church. Paul defends his ministry by citing results evident in the lives of the people.

I. The evidence of Paul's Spirit-led ministry (3:1-3). Paul informed the Corinthians that they did not need a letter of recommendation from him. The people in the church at Corinth was all the recommendation needed to verify Paul's ministry. Their changed lives were evidence that God was involved in his ministry.

The teachers who came with letters of recommendation could very well be Judaizers. There was a belief among the Jew that for one to become a Christian it was necessary to first become a Jew. This meant to observe all the ritualistic laws. Paul never placed any such burden on the Gentiles converted from paganism; it was not necessary. Paul challenged the Corinthians for paying any attention to the teachers.

Paul came to this city, won people to Christ, and formed them into a congregation. The people knew what Paul had done, and others knew because of his ministry to the Corinthians. He refers to them as being representatives of Christ. Paul's ministry verified itself through their lives.

The principle is still true. We are to be the evidence of Christ living in us. Our lives should be an open testimony of the love and grace of God. Changed lives are better than letters written on parchment or in stone. God writes his love in our hearts and we are to share it with the world.

II. The source of Paul's ministry (3:4-6). Paul defends his ministry, but he wanted them to understand it was not a defense of his ego. He was doing the work of God. God is the source of all that Paul does. He remembers his experience in meeting God on the Damascus Road. It was God who commissioned him to the work of ministry. He wanted to make that quite clear.

The source of our ministry today is also God. We are not capable of doing anything in our power. We must rely on God through the Holy Spirit to work through us. We are to do everything to the glory of God.

III. The superior glory of the Spirit's ministry (3:7-8). Paul compares the service of death with the service of the Spirit. The service of death is to follow the law. He indicates that the old covenant was great in its day. It was so great that the face of Moses shined, and the people could not look at it. Since that is true of the old covenant, just consider how much more the new. The old covenant was great because it revealed the nature of God. The new is more glorious because God is revealed through the presence of his Spirit. The law had become a barrier to seeing God. In the new covenant God is present in his Spirit.

IV. The greater liberty of the Spirit's ministry (3:12-18). Paul was bold in his ministry because of the superiority of the new covenant. The old covenant came from God through Moses, and its glory caused Moses' face to shine so that he had to cover it. For Paul the old covenant was glorious and came from God, but it was limited. On the other hand, the new covenant we have in Christ is unlimited with hope that is eternal. Without Christ they could never really understand the old testament; their minds were veiled by the law. When a person accepts Christ as Savior, the veil is lifted. The Christian is given freedom from sin, condemnation, death, and the law.

Christians have been set free in the Spirit to do the work of the ministry. It is not freedom without responsibility, but freedom to obey God and do his will. We are free from the bondage of death and alive in Christ. We are to express that freedom in our daily life. We have the freedom to communicate with God at any time or place. We have freedom to worship and witness. We have freedom to love our enemies and pray for those who do not treat us fairly. We have freedom to pray for lost people and know God hears our prayers. God helps us to exercise our freedom in accordance with his will.

Nestor is pastor, First Church, Bruce.

UNIFORM

The gift of living hope



By Bobby Williamson
1 Peter 1:3-9, 13-21

I once heard a preacher say the two saddest words in all of the English language were the words "no hope". When the doctor comes into the hospital room of our loved one, and says "no hope" we are certainly devastated. When an estranged spouse tells us that there is "no hope," we are destroyed. The Bible tells us that Satan is the father of all lies, and that God is the author of all truth. One of the lies that Satan tells us in many circumstances is that there is no hope. What does the Word of God do to this issue of hope? In our lesson this week we find a hope from God that is enduring.

I. The new birth to a living hope (1:3-5).

Peter declares to us in vv. 3-5 the blessing that believers have been born again and have been given a living hope by Jesus' resurrection. Without the resurrection there would have been no hope. The distinguishing mark of Christianity is that we serve a risen Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Buddha is in the grave, Mohammed is in the grave, Joseph Smith is in the grave, but Jesus conquered the grave that we might have eternal hope. In verse 4 Peter stated that Christians have an eternal inheritance reserved for them in heaven. We make many reservations during our lifetime, but there is none so important as the one that Jesus makes for us in heaven. Another wonderful thought is that heaven will never be overbooked. Airlines and hotels are infamous for overbooking these days, but in verse 5 Peter tells us that our reservation will be kept by God's power until the full revelation of salvation at the last time.

II. Rejoicing in the midst of trials (1:6-9).

A key element of our text this week is the focus that Peter places on Christ, instead of trials that come our way. So many times we spend all of our time concentrating on our problems, that we forget to look to Christ. Peter says not only should we look to Christ, but that we should rejoice in the midst of trials. The praise chorus says, "The world didn't give it to me, and the world can't take it away." The chorus, of course, speaks to the joy of knowing and continually fellowshiping with the risen Lord Jesus. As we face trials this week, let us focus with joy on Jesus, and the fulfillment of our salvation through him.

III. The demand and incentive for holy living (1:13-21).

If I were to be able to choose one single word that describes God, that word would be holy. God calls each of his children to a life of holiness, patterned after God's holy character. What is our motivation for holy living? Peter points to the death and resurrection of Christ as believers' motivations for living holy lives. Each of us as Christians should lead exemplary lives. Our only standard should be Jesus, for any lesser standard would be an abomination to a holy God.

IV. The evidence of holy living (1:22-25).

Jesus Christ paid a high price for our redemption. In giving his life, we should each be inspired to live lives that seek to be worthy of such sacrifice. Even though our salvation is free, a gift from God, it is not cheap. The good news for each of us is that there is hope! There is hope for a soul that is lost, and there is hope for those who are suffering through the trials of this life. That hope can only be found in the risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

Williamson is pastor, Park Place Church, Brandon.

capsules

BRYANT INAUGURATED AS PRESIDENT OF LUTHER RICE SEMINARY: James W. Bryant, a Georgian, will be inaugurated as the third president of Luther Rice Seminary on May 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of Rehoboth Church of Atlanta, Ga. W. A. Criswell, chancellor of Criswell Bible College, and senior minister of First Church, Dallas, will deliver the inaugural address. Luther Rice Seminary was chartered in Florida in 1962 and relocated to Atlanta, Ga., in 1991.

SUDAN PEOPLE IN SEARCH OF SAFE HAVEN: KAPOETA, Sudan (EP) — Some 12,000 Sudanese children and 10,000 adults in search of safe haven walked more than 350 miles from western Ethiopia toward the Sudan/Kenya border to an area the government bombed several times in the past six months. They arrived in a barren area between the Kenya border and the southern Sudan town of Kapoeta. The children, ages 7-17, whom the government claims are trained for military duty by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), had taken refuge from war and famine in camps in western Ethiopia in 1988. The camps have become dangerous and inaccessible with the overthrow of Ethiopian dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had been sympathetic to the SPLA. The children moved to Pochalla in Sudan, but, endangered there as well, moved to their current location. With deep cracks in their feet and ulcerous wounds on their legs, the children are threatened by war, disease, and starvation. World Vision will provide food, medicine, blankets, and other relief items to the refugees.

ANNIE ARMSTRONG INDUCTED INTO MARYLAND WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME: ANNAPOLIS, Md (BP) — Annie Armstrong, the first national executive of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, has been inducted posthumously into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame. The Maryland Women's Hall of Fame is sponsored by the Maryland Commission for Women and the Women Legislators of Maryland. The Hall of Fame honors Maryland women who have made unique and lasting contributions to the economic, political, cultural, and social life of the state. Guests attending the ceremony included Fran Olivier, WMU president of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware; Aduke Akinola, WMU president of Nigeria and secretary-treasurer of the Baptist World Alliance Women's Department; Catherine Allen, president of the BWA Women's Department; and Delanna W. O'Brien.

MARCH COOPERATIVE PROGRAM AND DESIGNATED GIFTS DOWN: NASHVILLE (BP) — The SBC Cooperative Program total received by the Executive Committee for March dropped more than 7% and designated gifts more than 22%, according to Harold C. Bennett, Executive Committee president/treasurer. However, for the SBC fiscal year — Oct. 1 through March 31 — the total for both Cooperative Program and designated gifts remained more than \$1 million ahead of the comparable period of 1990-91. CP totals for March were \$12,246,492 compared to last year of \$13,219,744. The 7.36% drop is \$973,252. Year-to-date for the CP is \$70,200,901 compared to 1990-91 year-to-date of \$71,543,354 which is a 1.88% decrease or \$1,342,452. Designated gifts for the month also fell, 22.59%, with March 1992 at \$14,704,765 compared to last year of \$18,995,700. The year-to-date designated totals were still up with \$80,918,178 for this fiscal year compared to \$78,221,160 in 1990-91.

TOSCANINI RECORDING NOW AIDING MISSIONS: B. Hutson Cousins, a member of First Church in Richmond and former head usher at the Mosque, discovered the disc among his records last year. "I gave it to First Church in honor of my wife, Douglas, who died in 1990," he said. The couple was married for 61 years. Sound technicians at First Church transferred the disc to audio cassette tapes last month and have made them available for \$3 each. All proceeds from sales will be contributed to missions causes.

SAUDI CHURCH GROWS; POLICE CRACK DOWN: HAHRAN, Saudi Arabia — As many as 1,000 Saudis have become Christians since the end of the Persian Gulf war, according to sources inside the country. The believers usually meet in homes, and worship even in Mecca — Islam's holiest site — according to reports. Islamic religious police reportedly are cracking down on the Christians. Two Christian leaders were arrested and beaten in February, and police are searching for other believers.

2,000 ACCEPT CHRIST AT MEDICAL CLINICS: CARACAS, Venezuela — About 2,000 Venezuelans accepted Christ as Savior during a recent medical project led by 134 Southern Baptist volunteers in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. Medical volunteers from 18 states provided general medical, eye, and dental treatment to 11,000 patients in clinics held at sites where Venezuelan Baptists hope to start new churches. One patient was led into a clinic because she couldn't see well enough to walk alone. Venezuelan Baptists gave the woman a Bible during spiritual counseling. After volunteers fitted her with glasses, she smiled broadly as she saw the Bible's pages and could read. A number of eye patients "wanted to use Bibles as 'eye charts,' showing their desire for the Word of God," said volunteer Alvinia Michalec of Richmond, Va., who enlists medical volunteers for the Foreign Mission Board.

South African Christians on front lines of social change

By Craig Bird

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (BP) — On commuter trains infamous for death, Baptist layman Lawrence Mabaso shares eternal life.

Elsewhere, missionary Carroll Shaw goes into the Valley of Death to distribute food and hope.

And survivors of the Swanieville massacre find shelter in Kagiso Baptist Church.

In South Africa, Christianity doesn't dodge the tough places.

"It is amazing how much people are willing to forgive," explained Zachariah Motaung, pastor of Kagiso Baptist Church. "They want to start a new life and move beyond the destructive evil of apartheid. The 'New South Africa' (a popular term designating a non-racist nation) means a lot to them."

Motaung and Kagiso Baptist Church (Mabaso and Shaw are members) are caught in a more subtle crossfire, as South Africa tries to undo almost half a century of apartheid without spawning a civil war.

The same outrage at senseless violence and inhuman social conditions that drive other blacks to terrorism surges through the congregation. But the same Jesus who commands them to defend the helpless tells them to love their enemies. The same Bible that says there is a time for war also insists on forgiveness.

Evangelical Christians often are viewed as wild-eyed radicals by

one end of the political spectrum and as gutless sellouts by the other. That's why African National Congress partisans threatened to burn the church when Motaung refused to let the ANC hold rallies there. That's why South African military and police glared at the pastor when he led a massive funeral for some of the Swanieville victims.

Guns and violent death are common passengers aboard the commuter trains. The trains are a natural byproduct of a system that decreed non-whites had to sleep miles from white cities — yet required non-white labor to run the economy.

But evangelicals also appreciate the arrangement; recent years have seen the emergence of "Christian cars."

"People learned where the gospel was being preached and where Christians were praying and singing," Mabaso said. "One result was muggings and attacks dropped to almost nothing on those cars."

The key word is "almost." Two years ago the victims of an apparently random attack on a train from Soweto to Johannesburg included a pastor friend of Mabaso's. He was fatally shot as he knelt in prayer.

Africa correspondent Bird writes for FMB.



Baptist layman Lawrence Mabaso, right, prays and a fellow Christian sings about eternal life on a African commuter train where violent death is a common passenger. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Lincoln, Pike men help build Harmony

By Jack Honea

Harmony Church, 12 miles out of Brookhaven, launched its building program last August. The church, averaging 58 in Sunday School out of 90 total membership, has Dewey Smith as its pastor.

After the 40' by 80' foundation was poured, the church began the job of contributing the labor rather than hiring it out.

A group of five to six men framed it out on weekends and evenings. Help came in December from about 25 men from the Lincoln and Pike associations repre-

senting seven churches.

As the decking began to cover the trusses and the framing of the walls took form inside the sanctuary, the time-honored tradition of pot luck meals swung into play provided by the women of the church for the volunteers.

Lincoln and Pike men gave more Saturdays, including one in January when the temperature didn't top 36 degrees and the rain threatened to turn to ice. What else can you do on such a day other than work inside a dry building, even if

it is the last weekend of deer season?

By Easter, Harmony Church would be praising God in a new building, thanks to volunteer help. Pete Butler, building chairman, says he'll be able to help someone else by returning the favor some day.

Jack Honea is construction coordinator in District 7 for the Brotherhood Department.



Paul Jones, pastor of First Church, Magnolia, and Ken Kirk, pastor of North McComb Church, work together cutting insulation for Harmony Church.

Baptist Record

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April 23, 1992